

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Celebrating the Year of Russia



Tuesday, April 25, 2017 at 8 pm

Dr. Bobbie Bailey & Family Performance Center, Morgan Hall
One-hundred Twenty-sixth Concert of the 2016-17 Concert Season

"To Russia with Love"

Leslie J. Blackwell, Conductor and Sherri N. Barrett, Accompanist

MEN'S ENSEMBLE AND CHAMBER SINGERS

Спасение соделал

SPASÉŇIYE SODÉLAL

Salvation Is Created, Op. 25, No. 5

Pavel Chesnokov (1877-1944)

Спасение соделал еси посреде
земли, Боже. Аллилуия.

Salvation is created in midst of the
earth, O God, Alleluia.

CHORALE

O OCCHI, MANZA MIA

O eyes of my beloved

Orlando di Lasso (1532-1594)

O occhi, manza mia,
cigli dorati!
O faccia d'una luna stralucenti!
Tienemi mente, gioia mia bella,

Guardam'un poc'a me,
fa mi contiento.

O eyes of my beloved,
O eyes of my dear love,
'neath arch'd brows glancing!
O face like moonbeams glowing in
pale beauty!
If in thy mem'ry, my radiant jewel,
one little thought you'll hold for me,
'twill make me content.

POKROV

Ion Melnik (b. 1935)

Edward Eanes, violin

Christopher Thibdeau, cello

К ТЕБЕ, О МАТЕРЬ ПРЕСВЯТАЯ

К Тебе, о Матерь Пресвятая,
Дерзаю вознести свой глас,
Лице слезами омывая:
Услышь меня в сей скорбный час.

To You, O Holy Mother,
Dare I to raise my eyes,
The face is washed with tears:
Hear me in this sad hour.

Прими мои теплейшие моленья,
Мой дух от бед и зол избавь,

Accept my warm prayers,
Save my spirit save from bad and
evil,

Пролей мне в сердце умиление,
На путь спасения наставь.

Pour content into my heart,
Put me on the path of salvation.

This Marriage

Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

May these vows and this marriage be blessed.

May it be sweet milk, like wine and halvah.

May this marriage offer fruit and shade
like the date palm.

May this marriage be full of laughter,
our every day a day in paradise.

May this marriage be a sign of compassion,
a seal of happiness here and hereafter.

May this marriage have a fair face and a good name,
an omen as welcomes the moon in a clear blue sky.

I am out of words to describe
how spirit mingles in this marriage.

MEN'S ENSEMBLE AND CHORALE

O My Luve's Like a Red, Red Rose

Rene Clausen (b. 1953)

lyrics by Robert Burns

Edward Eanes, violin

Christopher Thibdeau, cello

O my Luve's like a red, red rose

That's newly sprung in June.

O my Luve's like the melody

that's sweetly played in tune.

As fair art thou my bonnie lass

so deep in luve am I,

I will luve thee still my dear

Till a' the seas gang dry.

I will luve thee still my dear,

while the sands of life shall run,

Till the seas gang dry, my dear,

and rocks melt with the sun.

As fair art thou my bonnie lass,
So deep in love am I,
I will luvе thee still my dear,
Tho' it were ten thousand mile.

MEN'S ENSEMBLE

Weep, O mine eyes

John Bennet (1575-1614)

arr. William C. Powell

Weep, O mine eyes and cease not.
Alas these your springtides,
me thinks increase not.
O when begin you,
To swell so high that I may drown me in you.

У ворот, ворот

U VÖRÓT, VÖRÓT

At My Father's Gate

Modest Musorgsky (1893-1881)

У ворот, ворот
У ворот, ворот, ворот,
Да ворот бабушкиных.

Ай, Дунай, мой Дунай,
Ай, веселый Дунай!

Разыгрались ребята,
распотешились.

Одному-то молодцу
Да худо можетсЯ.

Худо можетсЯ,
Да нездоровитсЯ.

НездоровитсЯ,
Гулять хочетсЯ.

At the gate, the gate, the gate, at my father's gate.
Refrain: Ah, Danube, my Danube, ah, merry Danube!
At the gate, the gate, the gate, at my mother's gate.
Refrain: Ah, Danube, my Danube, ah, merry Danube!

The guys are getting rowdy, they're having fun.
Refrain: Ah, Danube, my Danube, ah, merry Danube!
I alone am feeling poorly.
Refrain: Ah, Danube, my Danube, ah, merry Danube!

Feeling poorly, feeling crummy.
Refrain: Ah, Danube, my Danube, ah, merry Danube!
I'm feeling crummy, I want to go out.
Refrain: Ah, Danube, my Danube, ah, merry Danube!

CHAMBER SINGERS

Five Hebrew Love Songs

Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

- I. Temuná
- II. Kalá Kallá
- III. Lárov
- IV. Éyze Shéleg!
- V. Rakút

Edward Eanes, violin
John Lawless, tambourine

I. Temuná (A Picture)
*A picture is engraved in my heart;
Moving between light and darkness:
A sort of silence envelopes your body,
And your hair falls upon your face just so.*

II. Kalá Kallá (Light Bride)
*Light bride
She is all mine,
And lightly
She will kiss me!*

III. Lárov (Mostly)

*"Mostly," said the roof to the sky,
"the distance between you and I is endlessness;
But a while ago two came up here,
and only one centimeter was left between us."*

IV. Éyze Shéleg! (What Snow!)

*What snow!
Like little dreams
Falling from the sky.*

V. Rakút (Tenderness)

*He was full of tenderness;
She was very hard.
And as much as she tried to stay thus,
Simply, and with no good reason,
He took her into himself,
And set her down
in the softest, softest place.*

- Hila Plitmann

Кто, волны, вас остановил

Музыка И. МЕЛЬНИКА

Ion Melnik

Сдова А. Пушкина

Кто, волны, вас остановил,
Кто оковал ваш бег могучий,
Кто в пруд безмолвный и
дремучий
Поток мятежный обратил?
Чей жезл волшебный поразил
Во мне надежду, скорбь и радость
И душу бурную и младость
Дремотой лени усыпил?
Взыграйте, ветры, взройте воды,
Разрушьте гибельный оплот.
Где ты, гроза — символ свободы?
Промчись поверх невольных вод.

Who, waves, you stopped,
Who bound your running might,
Who to the pond silent and dense

The flow of rebellious drew?
Whose baton struck magic in me
the hope, grief and joy and soul
turbulent and young slumber of
laziness lulled?
Play, winds, the nurse of the water
Destroy the disastrous bulwerk!
Where are you, a storm - a symbol
of freedom?

Will rush over involuntary treatment.

НАД ХАТЫНЬЮ КОЛОКОЛА

Above the Katyn Bells

Музыка И. МЕЛЬНИКА

Ion Melnik

words by I. Tokmakovoy

НАД ХАТЫНЬЮ КОЛОКОЛА

Ветер сладко пахнет гречихой,

Ветер горько пахнет полынью.

Ты не думай, что в мире тихо.

Слышишь звон перезвон над

Хатынью?

В небе стаи парили крылаты,
Вился белый дымок над хатой,

Просыхали хлеба на гумне,

Ночью травы шептали во сне,

Нам во сне.

И протяжно девушки пели, и
тихонько колодцы скрипели.

Тихо пели.

И горька да горька полынь.

Что случилось с тобою Хатынь?

Больше хлеба нет на гумне.

Вся Хатынь, Вся деревня, в огне

Больше хлеба нет хлеба нет.

Крик до неба детский плач.

Сжег деревню фашисткий палач.

Звон, перезвон, перезвон,
перезвон.

Только песня она не мертвфа.

Зелена как и прежде трава.

Только жизнь не сожжешь дотла.

Над Хатынью Колокола.

Бом, Бом, Бом, Бом.

The wind smells sweet like
buckwheat,

The wind smells bitterly of
wormwood.

Do not think that the world is quiet.

Do you hear the ringing of the chime

above Katyn?

In the sky, flocks hovered on wing,
There was a white smoke above the
hut,

The bread in the threshing floor was
drying up,

At night, the grass whispered
dreamily,

To us, as in a dream.

And the girls sang slowly, and the
wells creaked softly.

They sang softly,

And the ever bitter wormwood.

What happened to you Katyn?

More bread is not on the threshing
floor.

All Katyn, the whole village, is on fire

There is no bread, there is no bread.

A scream to the sky, a childish cry.

The village was burnt by a fascist
executioner.

A ringing, a chime, a chime, a chime.

Only the song is not dead.

Green as before is the grass.

Only life you can not eternally burn.

Above the Katyn Bells.

Bom, Bom, Bom, Bom.

To the Mothers in Brazil: Salve Regina

arr. Gunnar Eriksson

Lars Jansson (b. 1951)

Sam Skelton, soprano saxophone

John Lawless, percussion

Salve, Regina, Mater misericordiae
Ad te clamamus exules filii Hevae

Regina coeli laetare, Alleluia.
O clemens, O pia, O dulcis virgo
Maria

Et Jesum, benedictum fructum
ventris tui.

Hail Holy Queen, Mother of mercy
To thee do we cry, poor banished
children of Eve.

Queen of Heaven, rejoice, alleluia.
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin
Mary.

And Jesus the blessed fruit of thy
womb.

CHORALE, MEN'S ENSEMBLE AND CHAMBER SINGERS

BOGORÓDITSE DÉVO, RÁDUYAN

from *The All-Night Vigil, Op. 37*

Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943)

Богородице Дево, радуйся,
благодатная Марие, Господь с
тобою.

Благословенна ты в женах,
и благословен плод чрева твоего,

яко Спаса родила еси душ наших.

Rejoice, virgin mother of God,
Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with
you.

Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your
womb,

for you have borne the Savior of our
souls.

program notes

Pavel Chesnokov was arguably the foremost Russian composer of sacred choral works during his time. He wrote around 500 choral works, about 400 of them sacred. Chesnokov was a devout follower of the Russian Orthodox Church and was inspired to write most of his works for worship in that faith. His best-known composition, one of the few works he is remembered for today, is *Salvation is Created* (1912), *Spaséñiye sodélal*, and a Communion hymn based on a Kievan (Ukrainian) chant. During the Soviet era, Chesnokov was better known as a choral conductor than composer. Indeed, he was praised, even by the Soviets, for his skills in choral conducting, though they remained hostile to his sacred music throughout his lifetime.

Chesnokov's education was extensive: his first advanced studies were at the Moscow School of Church Music (graduated in 1895); he next worked privately with composer Sergey Taneyev and later studied at the Moscow Conservatory (graduating in 1917), where his list of teachers included Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov.

After the Bolshevik Revolution, Chesnokov was forced to abandon composition of sacred music, owing to sanction against such activity by the anti-religious Soviets. He thus embarked on composition in the secular choral realm.

From 1920, Chesnokov headed a choral conducting program at the Moscow Conservatory. He also remained busy, regularly conducting the choirs of the Bolshoi Theater and Moscow Academy. In addition, Chesnokov became the choirmaster at Christ the Savior Cathedral. In 1933, however, on orders from Stalin, the cathedral was demolished to make way for construction of a skyscraper that would never be built. Chesnokov became so distraught over the cathedral's destruction that he stopped composing altogether. He continued teaching and conducting various choirs in Moscow until his death on March 14, 1944. In the end, Chesnokov would go down as one of the most highly trained musicians in Russia, having spent years studying solfège, composition, piano, and violin.

Salvation is Created (transliterated from the Cyrillic – *Спасение соделал* or “Spaséñiye sodélal”) is one in a cycle of ten Russian Communion Hymns, Opus 25. This work bears the unfortunate distinction of being one of the last sacred works Chesnokov would compose before being forced to compose secular works by the increasingly oppressive leadership of the Soviet Union's Cultural Bureau. The text for the hymn is based on a passage from Psalm 74: “But you, O God, are my king from of old; you bring salvation upon

the earth.” His choral writing is characterized by a variety of textures, from austere unisons to sumptuous eight-part polyphony, and colorful harmony, which he often adds chromaticism. Approximately one-third of his sacred works are chant-based, while the rest are free compositions.

Orlando di Lasso. Legend has it di Lasso was such a good singer that as a boy he was kidnapped from his church choir three separate times by nobility to sing in choirs for them. He grew up to be a one of the most prolific writers of the Renaissance period. His Italian madrigal *O occhi manza mia* is the quintessential masterpiece. Di Lasso was famous throughout Europe, and his music was so beloved that he was called “the divine Orlando.”

Ion S. Melnik (Ион Мельник, born October 11, 1935, Moscow, Russia) is a Russian and Soviet era composer. His compositions include songs, choruses, instrumental music, and music to documentary films. Melnik began his musical education at the age of seven when he joined the children's ensemble of the USSR Ministry of Railways where he played the first dorna and later became the concertmaster of the orchestra. The music director of the ensemble was Simon Osipovich Dunaevsky, a brother of the legendary Soviet era composer, Isaak Osipovich Dunaevsky. In 1948, Dunaevsky recommended that Melnik enroll in the Seminar of Young Composers of the USSR's Union of Composers. After the Seminar, Ion Melnik continued to study composition at the Music College affiliated with the Moscow State Conservatory named after Tchaikovsky and the Leningrad State Conservatory named after Rimsky-Korsakov. The song *Pokrov* is a prayer to honor the Holy Mother. Pokrov is a Ukranian religious holiday celebrated on October 14.

Modest Musorgsky was a member of a group of Russian nationalist composers known as “the Five” (also know as the “Mighty Handful”); the other members were Mily Balakirev, Alexander Borodin, Cesar Cui, and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. Largely self-taught as a musician he was regarded as the most unconventional and innovative members of the group. He aspired to achieve a uniquely Russian musical identify, often in deliberate defiance of the established conventions of Western music, with regard to part writing and voice leading. Many of his works were inspired by Russian history, Russian folklore, and other nationalist themes. Among them the operas *Boris Godunov* and *Khovanshchina*, the orchestral tone poem *Night on Bald Mountain*, and the piano suite *Pictures at Exhibition*.

While working at a music school, Musorgsky, in 1880, made four arrangements of Russian folk songs for Men's Choir *a cappella*. In these

arrangements Mussorgsky demonstrates his sensitivity and skill in dealing with folk material: he preserves the songs modality, imitates some of the improvisatory aspects of “countervoice” polyphony, incorporates folk-style devices as breaths in the middle of syllables, and maintains the color of solo-tutti contrasts. While these songs remained unpublished during his lifetime, they clearly proved to be harbingers of things to come, finding their reflection in the arranging techniques of such composers as Katal'sky, Chesnokov, Shvedov, and their Soviet-era successors, such as Sveshnikov.

The song *У ворот, ворот, (U vorot, vorot batiushkinih)* (At My Father's Gate) is a whimsical song collected by the famous Russian folklorist Pyotr Kireyevsky (1808-1856). It is best known for its use in the middle movement of Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture*, where it is used as one of the leitmotifs to symbolize the resilience of the Russian nation with its deep folk roots. Alexander Katal'sky also arranged it for mixed voices. Both versions contain only a small selection of verses, which go on to talk about the pros and cons of married life in a somewhat bawdy and cynical fashion. Ethnographers have noted the frequent use of the word “Dunay” (Danube) in Russian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian folk songs stems from regions that are far removed geographically from the great river that originates in the Alps and runs through Eastern Europe.

Eric Whitacre. In the spring of 1996, my great friend and brilliant violinist Friedemann Eichhorn invited me and my girlfriend (at the time) Hila Plitmann, to give a concert with him in his home city of Speyer, Germany. We had all met that year as students at the Juilliard School, and were inseparable.

Because we were appearing as a band of traveling musicians, ‘Friedy’ asked me to write a set of troubadour songs for piano, violin and soprano. I asked Hila (who was born and raised in Jerusalem) to write me a few ‘postcards’ in her native tongue, and a few days later she presented me with these exquisite and delicate Hebrew poems. I set them while we vacationed in a small skiing village in the Swiss Alps, and we performed them for the first time a week later in Speyer.

In 2001, the University of Miami commissioned me to adapt the songs for SATB chorus and string quartet. Each of the songs captures a moment that Hila and I shared together. *Kalá Kallá* (which means ‘light bride’) was a pun I came up with while she was first teaching me Hebrew. The bells at the beginning of *Éyze Shéleg* are the exact pitches that awakened us each morning in Germany as they rang from a nearby cathedral. These songs are profoundly personal for me, born entirely out of my new love for this soprano, poet, and now my beautiful wife, Hila Plitmann.

Lars Jansson. *To the Mothers in Brazil: Salve Regina* was created to serve as a platform for musical and text-based exploration and improvisation. Originally conceived as an instrumental work the choral arrangement by Gunnar Eriksson premiered in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on March 7, 1995. It draws inspiration from the traditional Salve Regina text. Children are not the only ones to cry out for their mothers. Old men and women in solitude and despair cry out for their 'mama' like children. Mothers from all around the world travel to frontlines of war to bring their children home from unnecessary killing in pointless wars fought in the name of patriotism. Mary, mother of Jesus, represents well the loving, mothering qualities, and throughout history, people have cried out to her for comfort, aid and love.

Sergei Rachmaninoff's *All-Night Vigil*, or *Vespers* as the work is commonly called, was composed during a two-week period in January and February 1915. The preceding years had been particularly successful. He was acknowledged throughout Russia, Europe and the United States as an eminent conductor and virtuoso concert pianist; and he had composed and received critical acclaim for many of his most significant compositions, including the *Prelude in C-sharp Minor*, three piano concertos and two symphonies. During these years, Rachmaninoff wrote his two most important choral compositions – the *Liturgiia svyatovo Ioanna Zlatousta* (Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom) in 1910 and *Kolokola* (The Bells) in 1913.

At the beginning of the Revolution in 1917, Rachmaninoff fled Russia and moved to Stockholm, then Copenhagen, and finally New York City. In the 1920s, he toured throughout Europe and the United States as a concert pianist. During the 1930s he lived mostly in a villa on Lake Lucerne in Switzerland, where he composed his *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* and *Symphony No. 3*. He returned to the United States in 1939, where he died of cancer on March 28, 1943, just four days before his 70th birthday. He had hoped to be buried either in Switzerland or Russia, but because of travel restrictions created by World War II, he was buried in a cemetery outside New York City.

Rachmaninoff's complete choral output consists of three sacred *a cappella* works set to liturgical Slavonic texts, two secular choral/orchestral compositions, two collections of part songs, two *a cappella* cantatas, and one Latin motet. Rachmaninoff was especially fond of the *All-Night Vigil* and *The Bells*.

Performances of the *All-Night Vigil* in Russia for about the first 30 years took place in concert halls. By the middle of the 20th century, however, performances also occurred in churches. Since 1957, the work has been

performed regularly on the eve of Rachmaninoff's birth in the Church of the Joy and All Sorrowful in Moscow.

The *All-Night Vigil* was dedicated to Stepan Smolensky, a friend of Rachmaninoff and the highly respected director of the Moscow Synodal School of Church Singing. The premiere was on March 10, 1915, in the Great Nobility Hall of the Kremlin. This event was extremely successful, so much so that five previously unscheduled performances were given after the premiere. Movement 6, *Bogoróditse dévo*, often performed separately, became the most popular of Rachmaninoff's choral compositions during the 20th century.



KSU Chorale

SOPRANO

Tori Anderson
Daneel Bennett
Grace Breazeale
Rebecca Chesser
Madison Coffey
Lauryn Davis
Xandy Edwards
Lizzy Godwin
Brittany Griffith
Lily Li-Man Ko
Sierra Manson
Kayla Marks
Lindsay Peterson
Tatyana Popovych
Elena Prestwood
Marielle Reed
Elizabeth Shaver
Sarah Shiver
Hannah Smith

SOPRANO cont.

Mae Thornton
Sahaana Venkat
Naomi Williams

ALTO

Allison Chipman
Bekah Clegg
Lauren Faulkner
Noelia Franceschi
Joey Jacques
Deanna Johnson
Lulu Pearce
Elizabeth Reeves
Riley Schatz
Abby Snyder
Sarah Stevens
Emily Thomas
Graciela Vera
Kelsey Woods
Kahri Yeager

TENOR

Matthew Boatwright
Neil Buelow
Gregor Haas
Dennis Korwek
Chase Law

BASS

Will Cathey
Ben Champion
Miles Clayton
Dean Emerit
Blake Emmons
Roger Ibrahim
Colin McGarr
Dylan Peltenon
Jimmy Roberts
Jakari Rush
Phillip Staples

KSU Men's Ensemble

TENOR 1

Chase Law
Anthony Morris
Jeremiah Robinson
Travis St.Dic
Caleb Stack
Alex Turner
Bradley Weaver

TENOR 2

Camden Anich
Alexander Arnold
Noah Callahan
Riley Carson
Connor Finton

TENOR 2 cont.

Gregor Haas
Taylor Hall
Joss Stark
Michael Stewart

BARITONE

Stephen Bland
Alex Burcar
Jacob Michael
Patrick Chapman
Kristopher Davis
Lucas Gray
Dalton Hancock
Connor Lawson

BARITONE cont.

Kevin Loggins
Cody O' Shea
Jeremy Valore

BASS

Marcel Benoit, III
Nicholas Carlton
Jacob Chalk-Hildrith
Kenan Mitchell
Jimmy Roberts
Jonathan Swann
Logan Thomas
Matthew Welsh

KSU Chamber Singers

SOPRANOS

Emma Bryant
Mary Allison Hamby
Emily Hering
Ebony Lockwood
Claire Pappas
Callaway Powlus
Nasia Shearod
Hallie Skelton
Jennell Smith

ALTOS

Emily Bateman
Ziara Greene
Kristin Houston
Ericka Palmer

ALTOS cont.

Regan Romuno
Abigail Snyder
Macy Swanson
Tessa Walker
Deondria West

TENORS

Taylor Hall
Chase Law
Anthony Morris
Jason Raphaël
Jeremiah Robinson
Caleb Stack
Michael Stewart

BASS

Marcel Benoit, III
Nicholas Carlton
Ryan Cox
Lucas Gray
Kevin Loggins
Cody O'Shea
Matthew Welsh

biographies

Professor of Music History

Edward Eanes has served on the Kennesaw State University faculty since 1998. A South Carolina native, Eanes received a Ph.D. in Musicology from Louisiana State University, a M.M. in Violin Performance



from Florida State University and a B.Mus. in Performance from Furman University. Prior to his arrival at KSU, he taught at Louisiana State University, the University of New Orleans and Clayton College and State University.

Eanes' publications include *Giuseppe Ferrata: Emigré Pianist and Composer* (Scarecrow Press, 1999), numerous articles in the Grove Dictionary of Music Online and the International Journal of the Arts in Society, reviews for MLA NOTES and CD liner notes for the Centaur

Label. He has also presented papers at the national conferences of the College Music Society, the Society for American Music, the Music Library Association, the National Association of Schools of Music and the Hawaii International Conference on Arts and Humanities.

Eanes is currently the Concertmaster of both the Georgia Symphony Orchestra and Carroll Symphony Orchestra in Carrollton, GA. He is also a member of the Atlanta Opera Orchestra and has performed with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and the Louisiana Philharmonic in New Orleans. His solo credits include concerts with the Georgia Symphony Orchestra, the Carroll Symphony Orchestra, the Louisiana Sinfonietta, the Vermilion Chamber Orchestra, and the Furman University Orchestra. He is also a member of Atlanta By Six, a progressive chamber ensemble that performs in non-classical venues such as Eddie's Attic.

Limited-Term Assistant Professor of Music Education

Christopher Thibdeau, recently named Limited-Term Assistant Professor of Music Education (Strings) at Kennesaw State University (KSU), is also the Music Director of the Metropolitan Youth Symphony Orchestras of Atlanta, the Assistant Conductor of the Georgia Tech Symphony Orchestra and the Conductor of the Atlanta Chamber Music Festival. Christopher has previously served as the Interim Music Director of the Georgia Symphony

Orchestra and Chorus, the Conductor & Artistic Manager of Orchestras for the Atlanta Music Project, Associate Conductor of the Brighton Symphony Orchestra, and Cover Conductor of the Lexington Philharmonic Orchestra



and Firelands Symphony Orchestra. At KSU, Mr. Thibdeau teaches courses in strings pedagogy and education, leads the KSU String Project, and serves as the conductor of the KSU Philharmonic.

As an educator, Christopher has presented workshops and educational concerts in New York, Connecticut, Maine, Vermont, Texas, California, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, and other areas across the US. He was a panel speaker at the 2007 Connecticut State Music Teachers Association State Convention and has

been featured as a guest speaker and moderator for the Eastman School of Music “Polyphonic.org” webinar series. Most recently, Mr. Thibdeau spent ten days as a guest artist at the Afghanistan National Institute of Music in Kabul where he taught cello and conducting lessons and also had the opportunity to instruct the first ever female Afghan conductor, Negin Khpolkwak.

Christopher has participated in many conducting workshops and seminars, including the Conductors Retreat at Medomak under the direction of Kenneth Kiesler, the New England Conservatory Summer Institute where he studied under Frank Battisti and Charles Peltz, and the International Conducting Institute with the Round Rock Symphony under Maestro Peter Bay.

Christopher Thibdeau began studying the cello at the age of 8 and conducting at the age of 13. As an undergraduate student at the Eastman School of Music, Christopher was accepted into the conducting studio of Neil Varon and twice conducted the Eastman School Symphony Orchestra in the prestigious Eastman Theater. Mr. Thibdeau holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Cello Performance from the Eastman School of Music where he studied cello with Alan Harris and orchestral conducting with Neil Varon, and a Master of Music degree in Orchestral Conducting from the Cleveland Institute of Music where he studied with Carl Topilow.

Director of Percussion Studies

John Lawless, Senior Lecturer, joined the music faculty of Kennesaw State University in 1998 and became the Director of Percussion Studies in 2004. Principal Timpanist of the Atlanta Opera orchestra since 1979,



John held the same position with the Chattanooga Symphony for 21 years. Since 1978, Mr. Lawless has performed, toured and recorded with the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra while maintaining a thriving freelance career as a studio and pit percussionist.

A founding member of the Atlanta Percussion Trio, Mr. Lawless performs hundreds of school concerts a year for thousands of children throughout the Southeastern United States. Along with Scott Douglas and Karen Hunt, the trio

has been a performing group for 32 years, bringing educational programs to children of all ages.

As a soloist, Mr. Lawless played several concertos with the Chattanooga Symphony, including: *The Olympian for 8 Timpani and Orchestra* as well as *The Messenger for Multiple Percussion and Orchestra*, both written by James Oliverio. In 2009, Mr. Lawless performed Joseph Schwantner's *Concerto for Percussion* with the Cobb Symphony Orchestra. In 2014, he performed the Southeastern premier of Christopher Theofinidis' *Marimba Concerto* with the KSU Wind Ensemble for the Festival of New Music.

A graduate of Georgia State University, Mr. Lawless' teachers include Tom Float, Jack Bell, Cloyd Duff, Paul Yancich, Bill Wilder and Mark Yancich. Previous faculty appointments include those at Georgia State University, Clark Atlanta University and West Georgia State University.

Director of Jazz Studies & Senior Lecturer in Saxophone

Sam Skelton, a native of Conyers, Georgia, has been active on the Atlanta music scene for well over two decades. Skelton graduated *summa cum laude* from Georgia State University and the private studio of Tony Carere with a degree in Jazz Studies.

During his course of study at GSU, Skelton was a Montgomery Music Scholar and a two-time fellowship recipient to the Aspen Music Festival. He continued his saxophone studies with Kenneth Radnofsky at Boston University in 1991.

As a woodwind doubler, Skelton is well versed in any genre of music. His grasp of saxophone, clarinet and flute has enabled him to remain very busy in live performance as well as in the studio.



Skelton has performed and/or soloed with The London Symphony Orchestra, The Atlanta Symphony, The Atlanta Pops, The Peachtree Pops, The Atlanta Ballet Orchestra and The Cobb Symphony Orchestra as well as numerous local high school and civic ensembles. World Premiers include James Oliverio's *Children of A Common Mother*, Lee Johnson's *Ora Pro Mi: Concerto for Winds Soloist* (clarinet, flute and soprano saxophone) and *Seaside Symphony* (clarinet and soprano saxophone soloist).

Skelton also played the premier recording of *Ora Pro Mi* and *Seaside Symphony* with the London Symphony Orchestra.

As a sideman on over 175 compact discs, Skelton remains very active in the studio and can be heard on recordings by such artists as: Elton John, December Radio, Babbie Mason, Howard Tate, Matchbox 20, Train, Edwin McCain, The Gap Band and The Ohio Players. Television and radio jingles include *The Georgia Lottery*, *Glen Beck*, *The Weather Channel*, *The Travel Channel*, *Ford*, *The Cartoon Network*, *CNN*, *Nature's Own*, *Popeye's*, *Papa John's* and *Turner South*. Television appearances include *In the Heat of the Night*, *Savannah* and Sinbad's *Summer Jam II* on HBO.

Skelton is currently Director of Jazz Studies and Lecturer in Saxophone at Kennesaw State University. He is also Artistic Director of GSO Jazz and GYSO Jazz. Skelton served as Professor of Saxophone at Georgia State University from 1991 to 2004 and was Jazz Ensemble Director at Georgia Tech from 2002-2004 and Artist-in-Residence at The University of Georgia Jazz Department. He served as Visiting Professor of Saxophone at Furman University 2001-02. Professional associations include: Georgia Music Educators Association, Georgia Association of Jazz Educators, National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences (voting member) and the American Federation of Musicians. Skelton is a Conn-Selmer Artist.

Leslie J. Blackwell is the Director of Choral Activities and Professor of Music and Music Education at Kennesaw State University where she has directed choral activities since 1998. Dr. Blackwell's duties include conducting the KSU Men's Ensemble, KSU Chorale and KSU Chamber



Singers, as well as teaching advanced choral conducting and literature. A native of Georgia, Blackwell received the Associate of Arts degree from Gordon Junior College (1982), the Bachelor of Music in Music Education from West Georgia College (1984), the Master of Music from Georgia State University (1991), and the Doctor of Musical Arts degree from the University of Kentucky (2002).

Choirs under Dr. Blackwell's direction have performed at National, Regional, and State conferences of the American

Choral Directors Association, as well as numerous Georgia Music Educators Association State Conventions.

In 2010, Dr. Blackwell presented *Songs of South America* for the American Choral Directors Association with the KSU Chamber Singers, featuring music of South America based upon her choral research and work in Argentina. In October 2013, the KSU Chamber Singers were selected to perform at the National Collegiate Choral Organization 5th National Conference.

Recognized for her work with men's voices, Dr. Blackwell served six seasons as the Artistic Director of the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus, established the annual KSU Male Chorus Day at Kennesaw State University, bringing upwards of 200 high school male students to campus, conducted the 2013 Georgia All State Men's Chorus, 2016 Alabama All State Men's Chorus, and 2017 Tennessee All State Men's Chorus. Under Dr. Blackwell's direction the KSU Men's Ensemble, a non-auditioned ensemble, has achieved prestigious accomplishments on a State, Regional, and National stage.

Influential musicians with whom Dr. Blackwell has worked are Robert Shaw, Ann Howard-Jones, Yoel Levi, Norma Raybon, John Haberlen, David Maslanka, Ola Gjeilo, Ethan Sperry, Brian Schmidt and Jefferson Johnson. She also serves as the Repertoire and Standards Chair for Men's Choirs, Georgia ACDA. Currently, Dr. Blackwell is the Artistic Director and Founding Director of the Kennesaw State University Community & Alumni Choir.

about the school of music



Welcome to the Bailey Performance Center. We are thrilled that you are here!

The School of Music at Kennesaw State University is an exciting place to live, work and learn. Housed in the College of the Arts, the School is infused with masterfully skilled and dedicated performing teachers who care deeply about their profession, our programs, our community, and every student involved in music and the arts. This Performance Center is the jewel in our crown! We are so excited about the musical and

artistic events that happen here, and we are excited that you are here with us to enjoy them! The School of Music is busy preparing our students to be productive artists. We want them to be accomplished and creative leaders of the arts world of tomorrow, professionals who are diversely trained and well-practiced. Diverse in their backgrounds, our students hail from many of the leading musical arts and honors organizations from across the Southeast, and as a School of Music, we are dedicated to the purpose of furthering the arts and cultural offerings to our region and beyond.


Please take a look through our program book and notice those who advertise with us. They support us financially and help make this performance possible. I know that they will appreciate your patronage and support! Also, please note our *Name a Seat Campaign* listed within this program book. In preparation of our tenth anniversary, we have established a goal of naming 100 seats. Perhaps there is someone you would like to see honored in this way!


I look forward to a long and rewarding relationship with you. With your continued support of music and the arts, there is nothing that we cannot accomplish together!


A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen W. Plate". The signature is fluid and cursive.


Stephen W. Plate, DMA
Director, KSU School of Music

connect with us

 /musicKSU

 @musicKSU

 /musicKSU

 @musicKSU

musicKSU.com

Visit the Live Streaming page on musicKSU.com to watch live broadcasts of many of our concerts and to view the full schedule of upcoming live streamed events.

Please consider a gift to the Kennesaw State University School of Music.

<http://community.kennesaw.edu/GiveToMusic>